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+ METEOR LIGHTS UP THE SKY +
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+ By Ron Toft +
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THE THING which blazed a fiery trail across Britain's evening skies on April 25 was almost certainly a meteor;a chunk of rock from outer space heated by friction with the atmosphere to a fantastic temperature as it hurtled earthwards.

The celestial firework was seen by hundreds of people in such widely separated places as London, Belfast and Wick. Newspaper, police, fire-brigade and Ministry of Defence switchboards buzzed incessantly. One of those who saw the meteor was S.I.G.A.P. Chairman Omar Fowler, who lives in Mytchett Road, Mytchett, near Camberley. Here is his report: "I was sitting looking out of the window when the object appeared, moving rapidly towards the horizon. It was a brilliant whitish-yellow ball of fire $\frac{3}{4}^{\circ}$ in size, with a long greenish-yellow tail of 4° in length. The time was 9.20 p.m. The object was visible for three to four seconds. Its direction was 290° to 300° W.N.W. The elevation was 30° initially, then 20° , then it was lost from sight. I estimated its height as 80 miles".

Only three minutes after Omar's observation, S.I.G.A.P. received its first telephone report, from Mr. A. H. Lloyd, a Cranleigh member. This was followed by another at 9.30 p.m. from Mr.C. Hopper of Guildford. Said Mr. Hopper: "There were two tails on the object. It was electric-blue in colour, turning red towards the end of the tails. Three-quarters of a degree in size, it moved through 20° of sky towards the horizon, 20° West of North".

Astronomers at the Royal Edinburgh Observatory, Scotland, said they believed the remnants of the meteor ended up in the sea off the North Scottish coast. But the consensus of opinion generally, is that the fragments landed in Northern Ireland.

A Mr. Willie Greer, who lives in Ballymurphy, County Down, was quite adamant that the object - or what was left of it - had hurtled down into a bog near his bungalow. Mr. Greer, who reported seeing a greenish-blue light only about 2,000 feet up, was quoted as saying in "The Times" of April 26: "I thought it was an Army flare to do with all these pipeline explosions. But then it stopped, the light went out and it fell crashing down to the ground right in the middle of my bog". The mission hall just down the road shook at its foundations, and the ground quaked. Some ladies who were in the hall at the time reported hearing an explosion. A bang, at first thought to be a terrorist bomb, was also heard in Belfast.

Mr. Kenneth Gatland, Vice-President of the British Interplanetary Society, at first believed the fireball to be the remains of the Russian satellite Cosmos 265, re-entering the atmosphere. Others disagreed. Mr. Gatland checked his calculations and changed his mind.

It could have been a fairly large meteor, he concluded. A fire which broke out on a North Wales mountainside in the Conway Valley was thought to have been caused by pieces of the meteor which had broken away from the main body. But fire chiefs said later they were satisfied that the meteor was not to blame. This was backed up by the fact that no crater or meteoritic debris was found in the vicinity. On April 26 members of the Irish Astronomical Society searched for remains of the meteor on marshland near Ballymurphy - but found nothing.

FOOTNOTE: Meteors, technically speaking, become meteorites after they have landed. Twenty-one are known to have fallen on the British Isles. The heaviest was one which weighed at least 102 lb. (the largest fragment found tipped the scales at 17 lb. 6 oz.) which landed in Barwell, Leicestershire on December 24, 1965. The largest known meteorite in the world was found at Hoba West in 1920 (South West Africa). It weighs an estimated 59 tons. A much larger one is believed to be buried deep beneath the mile-wide Meteor Crater in Arizona, U.S.A.

AFTER quite a lengthy lull in local U.F.O. activity, S.I.G.A.P. is pleased to announce that sighting reports are starting to trickle in again. We can expect this trend to continue with summer almost upon us. With clearer skies and more people outside, there is a greater chance of U.F.O.s being seen - if any are around of course!

Reports have just reached us of a glowing rugby-ball shaped U.F.O. seen over Worplesdon by six people on April 14. The witnesses - Ted Kinge, Mick Dobson, Terry Cater, Tony Heather, David Watts and Bill Webb - were just outside the sports pavilion on the football ground at Perry Hill, Worplesdon.

Mr. Kinge (46) a charge-hand with Plastic Coatings Ltd., Guildford, said the U.F.O. was seen at about 9.45 p.m. The sky was overcast at the time. "The object gave off a blue-whitish fluorescent light", said Mr. Kinge, who lives in Rickford Hill, Worplesdon.

Mr. Webb, who also lives in Rickford Hill, gave the following description: "It was a very bright light - too large for a plane. There was no sound that we could hear. It had the speed of a very fast aircraft. The object disappeared behind a house and we did not see it again".

FIRST U.F.O. CONVENTION: Britain's first National Space and U.F.O. Convention is to be held in the grounds of Woburn Abbey this summer, by kind permission of His Grace, The Duke of Bedford. This important step in ufology has been arranged through the Interplanetary Space Travel Research Group (U.K.). The convention, to be held on Sunday, August 17 at Woburn, Bedfordshire, will be an opportunity for U.F.O. groups up and down the country to show the public aspects of their research and display their publications. There will be many prominent speakers, a film show, and refreshments. S.I.G.A.P. hopes to have a stand at the convention, which opens to the public at 11 a.m. Admission is by programme only; obtainable from: N.S.U.C., 149 Stewart Road, Leyton, London E.15. Adults: 4/- Children: 2/6.

SPECIAL ISSUE: The world-famous U.F.O. publication "Flying Saucer Review" has just published a special 72-page issue entitled: "The Humanoids", which deals "exclusively with reported landings of U.F.O.s and contact with their alleged occupants". Price: 12/- From: 49A King's Grove, Peckham, London S.E.15.

A CHANGE OF MIND: "Hogwash" was Dr. Hynek's reaction to U.F.O.s when he was called as a scientific consultant to Wright Patterson Air Force Base, near Dayton, Ohio, U.S.A., many years ago. But he has changed his mind since that time. "It is now a scientific problem", says Dr. Hynek, Chairman of the Department of Astronomy at Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, and consultant on U.F.O.s to the United States Air Force since 1953. "I would like to see U.F.O.s put on a par with other scientific problems". Dr. Hynek classified sightings on a double scale. This scale includes a strangeness index, sightings with no logical or scientific explanations, and a credibility index based on the reliability of people reporting the sightings. He said that competent research had been held back because scientists, the public and the press pay more attention to hoaxes than to reports which "have remained a mystery for over ten years". "To say our planet is the only part of the universe to have life is like saying 'my cat is the only one that can have kittens'". "Not one sighting", complained Dr. Hynek, "has been given the interest and thorough investigation of a major crime in the U.S. I deplore the lack of scientific talent and equipment to investigate U.F.O.s. Unfortunately, I personally have never seen a U.F.O. I am disappointed and feel left out". "If you see an object", says Dr. Hynek, "first get witnesses. Try, if possible, to get a photograph. When estimating speed, size, shape and brightness, use the artist's tool of thumbnail and some distant object for comparison".

(Credit: "Saucer Scoop", St. Petersburg, Florida).

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+ SATELLITE NEWS: A SUMMER VISITOR +
+ By Tim Childerhouse +
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AS the sun comes north and the birds return to these islands, we also welcome the return of a regular summer visitor, SAMOS 2. This unusual naked-eye satellite is visible, always northbound, from April to September in the northern hemisphere and southbound from October to March in the southern. The satellite will pass over Britain at almost the same time every day. Samos 2's nightly appearance is between 22 and 23 hours U.T. Launched on January 21, 1961, apogee (furthest point away from Earth) about 550 km. and perigee (nearest point) 450 km., Samos 2 will remain with us for another five or six years. In this time the period of revolution will change and Samos 2's nightly pass will not be quite so regular. The satellite is affixed to an Agena rocket, the whole being about 25 feet long and five feet wide, in all quite a large object. It is a well predicted satellite (4th magnitude) but occasionally Samos 2 deceives us by rolling slightly and then the satellite appears as at magnitude six, the eye's limit. Given a high priority number, Samos 2 is a regular easy-to-find object and soon becomes a favourite with observers.

ECHO 2, the brightest satellite in orbit, and "big brother" to Echo 1, is predicted to decay by the end of May. It has been suggested that the flimsy plastic skin could survive the re-entry back to Earth. This large balloon satellite has been given a high priority and it is hoped that the decay will be observed. If a bright fairly fast-moving object is seen going north, it is probably Echo 2 on one of its last orbits of the Earth.

Mr. Childerhouse, one of S.I.G.A.P.'s consultants, works in the Space Department at the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough. He gave a talk entitled: "New Satellites in Space" at the April meeting. Mr. Childerhouse told members that a total of 1,610 objects were in orbit round the Earth on March 1. Many satellites, he said, had given rise to U.F.O. reports, and it was not generally realised that at this time of the year, between 8 p.m. and midnight, it was possible to see as many as 50 bright objects traversing the sky. He went on to say that a number of satellites now carried reflecting mirrors, which could be seen as flashes in the night sky. There were also satellites with small searchlights on them and it was a known fact that military space vehicles were equipped with small motors, enabling them to change their orbit.

Mr. Childerhouse added that at the time of the Worpleston sighting on April 14, the satellite Pageos A had been passing over. But the direction, height and speed of the reported U.F.O. precluded it from being that satellite.

HAYLING ISLAND SIGHTING: A retired Hayling Island nurse claims she saw a U.F.O. in the early hours of the morning of March 18. The witness, who prefers to remain anonymous, saw the object between 1 a.m. and 2 a.m. It was "brighter than a star and moved around the sky in various gyrations. It came down vertically, hovered, and then moved up again at an angle of approximately 90°. The colour was dazzling white and the object had what appeared to be a shower of glistening light beneath it. The object had a pointed end and a dark band". The witness was interviewed by S.I.G.A.P. Chairman Omar Fowler. Here is his verdict: "She pointed out that it could not have been an aircraft and I think it unlikely that the sighting could be accounted for by any natural phenomena. The observer is believed to be in her late 70's but is mentally alert. She does suffer from tiredness though. Glasses are usually worn, but they were not worn during the sighting. She has not seen anything like this before. She is familiar with the star constellations as she used to navigate when a nurse in North Canada".

NEW APPOINTMENTS: S.I.G.A.P. Bulletin Editor Ron Toft has been appointed official English correspondent to the Argentina U.F.O. publication "Espacio". And the magazine's editor, Senor Guillermo Aldunati, has agreed to be S.I.G.A.P.'s representative in the Argentinian Republic. Members may recall that a large number of U.F.O.s have been reported in South America recently. "Contact" cases in particular, seem to be on the increase. It will, therefore, be of tremendous value to have such a competent researcher as Senor Aldunati to sort out first hand the facts from hoaxes and newspaper sensationalism. Ron Toft has also been appointed English representative for the U.F.O. Research Committee, based in Seattle, Washington. As well as having its own team of researchers throughout the States, U.F.O.R.C. also has representatives in Argentina and Chile. U.F.O.R.C. was formed in June 1965 and publishes a monthly bulletin. Director Rod Dyke hopes to write an article for us in the not too distant future.

SPECIAL EDITORIAL ANNOUNCEMENT: Last year S.I.G.A.P. announced that it had tentative plans to launch a magazine of sorts before too long. We are now pleased to inform our readers that we can go-ahead with this project. Cover designs are being drawn up with the very able help of S.I.G.A.P.'s artist-member, Dan Butcher. It has been agreed to call the new publication "PEGASUS", after the star constellation and the winged horse of Greek mythology. It will replace the "S.I.G.A.P. Bulletin" and appear in a quarto duplicated format each month. Eventually, funds permitting, it may be possible

to completely print it. "Pegasus" will contain local and foreign U.F.O. news, details of S.I.G.A.P. projects, the latest developments in astronomy and space research, and many other interesting topics. The first issue should be out shortly.

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+   CAMBRIDGE U.F.O. SEMINAR       +  
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A special U.F.O. seminar was held in Churchill College, Cambridge University, on Saturday, April 19. Aimed primarily at making members of the British U.F.O. Research Association more proficient researchers, it was attended by S.I.G.A.P. Chairman Omar Fowler. The following is a full report of the seminar, by Omar:

B.U.F.O.R.A. Information Officer Richard Farrow opened the proceedings. He spoke on the problems of trying to extract useful facts from a witness' report, such as the comparative size of the U.F.O. when compared with a known body such as the sun or moon. It had been proven on many occasions, he said, that a witness tended to exaggerate the size of an object in the sky when there was nothing to compare it with. A compass bearing on the true direction of the sighting was also important. There was a lengthy discussion when it was suggested that if the opportunity arose, the investigator should take a peep into the witness' book-case, with a view to seeing if he read wild science-fiction stories or had any U.F.O. books in his possession. Richard went on to disclose that B.U.F.O.R.A. now had a psychologist on their panel of consultants - a Mr. Stonebridge, who together with Dr. Cleary-Baker, Anthony Durham and Norman Hardy, a newspaper science correspondent, would endeavour to untangle the important facts from the reports received.

Stephen Smith, B.A., then took to the floor and discussed in great detail his interpretation of the Condon Report and the important lessons to be learned from it. He was particularly concerned with the importance of intensive investigation of major cases and the correct documentation and presentation of the evidence. It was essential that the question and answers should be written up in a presentable form. Stephen Smith, who is the B.U.F.O.R.A. Research Director, appealed for more help from other groups affiliated to B.U.F.O.R.A. to assist in the writing up and investigation of U.F.O. reports in the same way that S.I.G.A.P. had offered its assistance.

Anthony Durham then spoke on "Perception". He informed us of the large number of natural phenomena to be seen. If what he says is true, it's a wonder my car was not struck by tornadoes, ball-lightning and meteorites on the way to Cambridge. However, Anthony went on to disclose such things as five per cent of the male population of the United Kingdom are colour blind, while the chance of a woman being colour blind is only 1 in 100. He added that the planet Venus, satellites and aircraft, accounted for 50 per cent of all U.F.O. sightings. He went on to point out that there were countless natural explanations for many U.F.O. reports - such as temperature inversions and mirages, the latter can be easily seen over a hot tarmac road in the summer. Sun "dogs", atmospheric changes at sunset, lenticular clouds, meteors leaving trails for up

to an hour after they have passed, and his old chesnut - ball-lightning. These, together with such things as aircraft landing lights and meteorological balloons going up every six hours, made the audience wonder whether there were in fact such things as U.F.O.s after all! According to Anthony there are 100,000 incidents of ball-lightning over the U.K. each year. Finally we were advised to read two books, and this is good advice: "Light and Colour In The Open Air", by M. Minnaert. Bell. 25s., and "Eye and the Brain", by L. Gregory. World University Library. 14s.

Stewart Miller then spoke on the reliability, or rather the unreliability of witnesses, and he gave his ideas on how they should be approached: First of all try and interview the witness within the first 24 hours, or possibly small points will be forgotten. The witness should be interviewed on his/her own and asked first of all to write down the incident exactly as it was remembered, without comments of any kind from the interviewer. Questions about colour, speed, direction and general movement, etc., should be asked afterwards, and during the period of questioning the witness should be studied for any sign of bad nerves, wild imagination and similar things. Imagination, it seems, may play a greater part than we suppose, and it was an important point not to believe the witness' first statement as gospel truth. The witness may well have imagined that he saw something, when actually he had not. This was quite possible, Stewart commented. Lack of sleep would lead to hallucinations. A person suffering from this was quite likely to see flashes out of the corner of his eyes. Possibly the witness might be under the influence of drugs and this could lead to visual aberrations. Anti-biotics could cause the same effect. Obviously there are many things a potential interviewer must bear in mind.

Finally, Roger Stanway and Anthony Pace gave the audience the benefit of their experience gained during their "flap" investigations in Staffordshire. How for instance if a number of sightings were reported you should write all the details as soon as you get them. The occasion may not present itself to make notes later and things can get terribly confusing. It is also wise to conserve your energy and not to exert yourself chasing "lights in the sky" when you might well have a landing case and be too tired to investigate it properly. It was also useful to keep a diary of U.F.O. activity as this would enable one to keep things in their correct order. Finally, when giving the press details of any U.F.O. activity, it is best to restrict the information in case it influences potential witnesses.

The seminar as a whole was extremely useful and it enabled a wide range of views to be expressed about the whole field of U.F.O. investigation. This type of meeting is far more beneficial than listening to one person's theories for a couple of hours.

NEWSPAPER SENSATIONALISM: Early reports of the talk given by Air Marshall Sir Victor Goddard at a "Contact" meeting in Caxton Hall on Saturday, May 3, suggest that, unlike the headline in the "Evening News" of April 30, he did not reveal U.F.O. secrets alleged to have been uncovered by him in Washington in the mid-1940's. He only gave some indication of his own thoughts that tended to deepen the mystery. Sir Victor spoke on the subject of Extra Sensory Perception and said that this may hold more answers to the U.F.O. problem than people imagined. A metascientific study should be carried out in more detail, he said. On the subject of U.S.A.F. and Ministry of Defence U.F.O. secrecy, Sir Victor said this rumour had no basis in fact. He claimed that the report about him in the "Evening News" was just newspaper sensationalism and he had been completely misquoted.

LATE NEWS: Two fragments of the meteor mentioned on page one have now been found. One, weighing 16 lb., is being examined by atom scientists at Harwell. The other is much smaller and part of it has been sent to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington.
